

# SAFETY

## Walking School Bus

*Volunteers helping make our neighborhoods safe for our children.*



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What can we do to  
help our children get  
to and from school  
even safer?

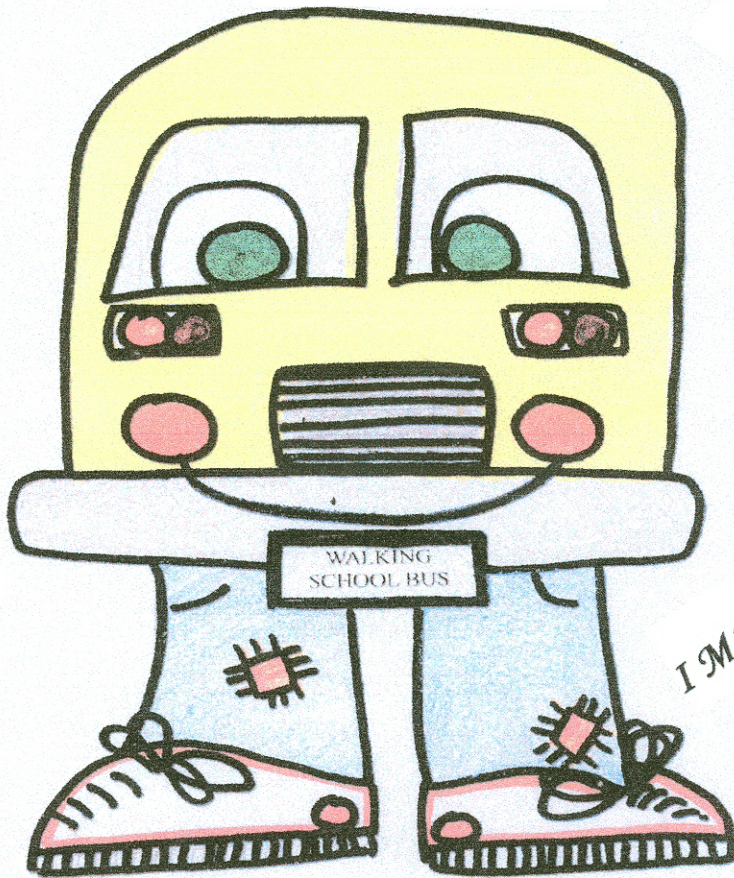


# Falls Valley Walking School Bus

I AM A WINNER

I WIN PRIZES

I AM SAFE



I AM HEALTHY

I MAKE NEW FRIENDS

Get Healthy, Stay fit, Be Safe!!!

STUDENTS, AND VOLUNTEERS CAN WIN FUN  
PRIZES JUST FOR PARTICIPATING!!!!

ASK ME HOW - MARION MCBRIDE 208-520-4825 OR EMAIL ME

three\_angel@msn.com



# WHY A WALKING SCHOOL BUS?

## Why bother?

We have many children who walk up to a mile to school and home each day....alone.

We have a many parents driving children to and from school, causing traffic problems around the school making it very difficult for buses to get in and out as well as parents.

We have registered sex offenders that live in our walking areas near our school.

These three reasons gave us motivation to encourage safer routes to school.

## Our story.....

Ours began with a mom that was worried about the safety of our children. She began with trying to get the three registered sex offenders to move out of our neighborhood. When she discovered that wasn't possible, she started working to make our neighborhood more safe. She started looking at other walking school bus programs in different states. She contacted our districts safety coordinator and they started the paper work to obtain a grant.

Once the grant was awarded we had to decide how we would use the money. We were told that It would be a trial year to see how it would help our school.

## We love our kids!

We live in a different world than we did 20 years ago. We need to keep a closer watch on our children. The days of children riding their bikes all day around town are almost gone.

But do they have to be?

What makes a community safe? For me it is knowing my neighbors. I feel safe having my children play in the neighborhoods where I know the people. I know that if my children are causing problems I will receive a phone call informing me and I can take action. I also find comfort in knowing that if my child needs help, there are many houses they can run to.

That doesn't need to be just my street. It can be every street between my house and the school, even more. We should know our neighbors, we should watch out for each others children.

This is the principle that we got so excited about in creating "OUR" Walking School Bus.

So back to the question, 'Why?'

My answer is "Why Not?"

Why not get to know our neighbors.

Why not develop friendships.

Why not watch out for each other.

Why not feel safer.

Why not BE safer.



# SPREADING THE WORD

## **How to get the kids walking?**

At first we wanted an assembly, but then realized that this program only affected less than half of the students.

We had the principal announce over the intercom at the end of each day for about a week that parents were going to be out helping us to get home safe. He told them that they we would be wearing a “school bus colored jacket” just like the one he’s been wearing.

He told them that someday we may even have prizes for them so to be sure to tell us HI.

## **And keep them walking.....**

We tried to space the prizes so they didn’t know what days they might get something.





## FALLS VALLEY WALKING/CYCLING SCHOOL BUS

A WONDERFUL WAY TO START EACH DAY!

### ***Why ride when you can WALK?***

### ***Join the Walking School Bus planning committee!***

A "Walking School Bus" is powered by legs rather than an engine, and designed for students who live within a mile of their school. It allows a designated adult supervisor ("bus driver/ rider" to "pick up" each student, at a designated meeting place on the way to school. The group of students walks to school, quickly and safely, along a set route and under the guidance of trained adult supervisors, all the while enjoying fresh air, exercise and conversation. School administrators, parents and community members collectively plan the designated walking routes, coordinate the student pick-up locations and times, and organize the chaperone schedule for adults volunteering as "bus drivers".

**By taking part in the Walking/Cycling School Bus program, you can help to support a number of community benefits:**

- ◆ Increase daily physical activity for children and adults in the neighborhood.
- ◆ Increase safety for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- ◆ Reduce traffic around the neighborhood and school.
- ◆ Increase community connections by helping neighbors to get to know one another.

**Please complete the information below and mail, email or fax to:**

Marion McBride

208-520-4825

fax# 208-522-6500

[three\\_angel@msn.com](mailto:three_angel@msn.com)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: (Day) \_\_\_\_\_ (Evening) \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ I am interested in joining the planning committee

\_\_\_ I am interested in volunteering FOR WALKING

\_\_\_ I am interested in volunteering FOR CYCLING

\_\_\_ I am interested in finding out more information



# SAFE ROUTES

## Where are the students walking?

Get to know your neighborhoods. Be there before and after school to see the routes the students are already taking.

Copy a map of your area from a phone book or obtain one from your principal. Color code each path that is being used. We used 6 routes to start.

# FINDING SUPPORT

## Who can I ask to help?

Start by observing your routes and find out who is out already walking with their children. We started by asking them if they would join our safety team, wear our jacket and be available if students needed their help. They were all willing to serve. We had them continue walking the route they already were walking. We then asked them if they knew of anyone else that would be willing to help.

Many that wanted to help had infants and said they could walk everyday.

We decided to add safety houses along the routes, so children could be watched from a window and knew they could knock on the door for help.

We made a sign for each of the houses to post in there window for children to recognize as a safe house.

## Develop a team!

Every person willing to help in any way is an important member of your safety team. We found it very successful to meet together in the beginning and talk of our first day introducing the program to our students. We met for lunch, became friends and talked of a safer community.

After the program started, we planned a BBQ and had the families of all the volunteers bring a side dish and mingle.

It was a great success!

It helped us to realize we weren't the only ones out there. Many of us were on a different street, doing the same thing.

We even gave a jacket to our crossing guard since he plays an important role in keeping them safe.



# INCENTIVES

## Are they needed?

Absolutely! First of all it gives the volunteer a reason to approach the student. Whether they are walking or in a safe house it gives them opportunity to develop a relationship.

## What types?

We started with what was free. The Safe Routes to School organization gave us bookmarks, wrist bands, reflectors, handkerchiefs and pedometers. We handed them out a few each day until everyone had each item. The kids were excited to see us and even more excited if they received a prize.

Next we purchased t-shirts. We started by handing out order forms so we could get the right sizes. The shirts were free to walking/biking kids. They loved them.

After t-shirts we ordered water bottles and frisbees. We each handed out water bottles for a few months and then frisbees.

We are ending the year with a bike raffle. During the month of April all children who walk to or from school can get a raffle ticket to enter in for our free bike.



## Don't forget the volunteers!

In the beginning, they all received jackets. We told them if they volunteered for the entire year the jacket was theirs to keep. If they needed to stop, we would need to use it for their replacement.

After the first month we gave each volunteer a \$25 gift certificate to Johnny Corino's (a local Italian Restaurant)

Next we had a BBQ for the volunteers and their families. We supplied the hamburgers and drinks, they brought a salad or dessert. We had a great turn out. The children were proud of their mom/dad for being involved and allowing them to be apart of it.

Our principal cooked the hamburgers!

After the winter months we gave them all movie, drink and popcorn tickets for each of them and their spouse.

At the end of the year we will do a raffle for our volunteers and one will win a weekend getaway for two.

I think many of them would have volunteered without the perks, but it is great to show our appreciation and of course they love it!

We did tell a few in the beginning that their would be gift certificates given which motivated many to try our program. The ones who joined later when they saw us in action were pleasantly surprised with the extras we offered them for their help.





# SAFETY FAIR

**A great way to make our neighborhood even better!**

We wanted to create an event to inform parents and students how to keep safe.

We called it a fair and decided we wanted it fun to attract the most families possible.

Listed below are some of the ways we were able to do that.



Our district safety coordinator was able to gather enough donations so that we could purchased "Kidz'nPower" DVD's to give away to each family. Along with them were Identification kits that would be distributed and done by police officers. Teeth moldings were also taken by professionals.

## **WE WANTED FOOD AVAILABLE FOR A REASONABLE PRICE.....**

We decided to purchase food that we could sell for 25 cents. This wasn't an event to make money, it was an event to educate.

We sold *Hot dogs, chips, cookies, pop, candy and water.*

We also had teachers and duty aides give away FREE HOT DOG coupons to children in their class



# Falls Valley Safety Fair



March 13, 2008 • 5:30-8:30 pm • at Falls Valley School

LET'S JOIN TOGETHER TO TEACH OUR CHILDREN SAFETY AWARENESS AND STRENGTHEN OUR NEIGHBORHOODS

## Safety Demonstration with Dinner

5:30, 6:30 or 7:30

Each family will receive a FREE DVD Library on

- Abduction
- Internet Safety
- Child Identification
- Self Defense

Presented by  
Police Department &  
the American Taekwondo  
Association

Each family that attends will be entered into a drawing!!!  
For a "Family Night Out" (Dinner and a Movie)

Hot Dogs, Popcorn  
Drinks, Chips, Candy  
All only \$.25 Each

### ...Child Identification Kits...

- Fingerprints
- Teeth Molds
- DNA Swab

\*All done by trained professionals  
Each child that completes all three  
will receive 2 weeks FREE lessons  
of Taekwondo

### ...Many Booths...

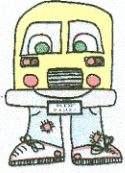
- Buckle Up Game
- Helmet/Bike Gear Race
- Safe Routes to School Maze
- Taekwondo Mini Lessons
- Boy Scouts of America
- And More...

Meet our New Principal for  
2008-09 School Year, Tom Gauchay



BE SURE TO SIGN YOUR CHILD'S POSTER SO THEIR CLASS CAN WIN VARIOUS PRIZES!





## **FALLS VALLEY WALKING/CYCLING SCHOOL BUS**

Dear Parents,

As you may not have known, we have been working for some time to reduce the traffic congestion around our school and promote safer and healthier alternatives for our students who are within walking distance from our school. We plan on participating in International Walk to School Day for all our students and hold regular, daily Walking/Cycling routes for our students that are in our non-bussing locations. Our students and parents are to be congratulated for their efforts in supporting these important initiatives.

We would like to encourage families to walk to school on a more regular basis. We know some of you are already doing this and we thank you for setting a great example for the rest of us.

To this end we are promoting Walking/Cycling School Bus every day at our school. The attached flyer will give you more details on this program. If you are interested in participating in Walking/Cycling School Bus program daily, please complete the form on the back of the flyer and send it back to the school with your child.

It may not be possible for you or your child to walk every day but if you can do it just two or three days a week it would be better than not at all. If we all do a little we'll achieve a lot!

Participating families will receive a Walking/Cycling School Bus supplies, as well as wonderful chances to earn great gifts along the way. Some of these gifts are, but not limited to T-shirts, hats, water bottles, bike for the students and dinners, t-shirts, water bottles, and a small get away for the adults. Please ask your head volunteer for more details. Marion McBride 208-520-4825

We are so excited to see you participate in a program that will benefit your our communities, and our individual families. Thank you in advance for your support in this matter.

SINCERELY



Falls Valley School Safety Fair  
March 13 from 5:30 to 8:30 at Falls Valley

Falls Valley has been the first school chosen in District #93 to participate in a wonderful program to teach our children safety.

We are very excited about this program and hope to generate a lot of excitement about it. The whole purpose of the program is to teach our children safety awareness and to further safety awareness in our neighborhoods.

Guy Blissner, District #93 Safety coordinator, has found funding to put together a fun night for our community. He has ordered safety DVD's for every family in the district that attends the fair. We are going to have an interactive safety demonstration where the kids can learn some self defense methods. We will also have the EITC dental hygiene class there to take molds of everyone's teeth. Each child will go home with a DNA kit complete with pictures, fingerprints and hair samples. Local policemen will be there along with safety vehicles on display outside. Dinner will also be served at a minimal cost to families. The children will be able to earn tickets to get free hot dogs at the fair. The kids will also get to meet our new principal for next year, Mr. Tom Gauchay.

This is going to be a wonderful night for all who attend.

Thanks!

If you have any questions please call our Walking School Bus Coordinator Julee Sidwell - 542-6005

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# MAKING A PLAN

## Who needs help?

Children who live in areas where buses aren't routed.

Many children who walk or bike to school are on their own. Many times their parents have already left for work and then they head out for school. If the child runs into problems, who would know?

The school would contact the parent a few hours later to ask why the child wasn't at school.

The parents may not even know until school was out and their child didn't make it home.

Children who wait at bus stops.

Many problems occur while children are waiting, who will help them from danger? Bus drivers often find out problems when it is too late.

## Who is apart of your team?

In the beginning stages only a few are needed. The districts safety coordinator, the schools principal and a few parents who are willing to start the brain storming. More will be added later.

## Do I need funding?

Absolutely! Getting started means getting the students excited. Prizes work great. You will also need supplies. Grants are available to support your efforts in beginning stages of your program. Fundraisers or donations will help you keep it going in future years once your community sees what a difference your program has made.

# WHAT WORKS FOR YOU

## How do I design my walking school bus?

There is no right or wrong way to create safer areas. You just have to decide what works best for your school.

I don't think we would have been nearly as successful if we were given rules that we had to follow.

There is much trial and error. Think of a plan and then talk it over with many people and get their input. Program design is half of the fun

## Get unified!

We decided that before obtaining our team, we needed a way to let the students know who we are. We talked of many ideas and decided to purchase high visibility jackets.

This let the students and teachers know who we are.

We gave one to the principal and asked him to wear it and to announce to the students that there will be safety parents along their routes home wearing the same jacket and they are a part of the school team or safety.



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